

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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UNCLAS NEW DELHI 12685

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG TECH IN US
SUBJECT: G K REDDY ON INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN INFCE MEET

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI FROM MADRAS SEP 09
IS REPEATED

QUOTE
UNCLAS MADRAS 1450

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, IN, US
SUBJECT: G.K. REDDY ON INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN INFCE MEET

FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF G.K. REDDY ARTICLE TITLED:
"PARTICIPATION IN INFCE MEET WILL NOT MAKE INDIA SLOW DOWN
NUCLEAR PROGRAMME" APPEARING IN SEPTEMBER 9 HINDU.

QUOTE.

INDIA HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE
ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL
NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION (INFCE) WHICH THE U.S. IS
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CONVENING FROM OCTOBER 18 TO 21 IN WASHINGTON.

ABOUT 30 COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE
PREPARATORY TALKS BEFORE A FULLER CONFERENCE IS CONVENED
LATER ON TO EVOLVE, UNDER PROPER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL, ALTERNATE
NUCLEAR CYCLES THAT DO NOT BREED WEAPONS GRADE PLUTONIUM AS A
BY-PRODUCT LIKE THE PRESENT DAY FUEL SYSTEMS.

IT IS ARGUABLE THAT, IN AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY OF THIS NATURE, A COUNTRY LIKE INDIA, WHICH HAS QUESTIONED THE VERY BASIS OF THE NPT ON THE GROUND THAT IT IS BOTH UNEQUAL AND DISCRIMINATORY, HAS IN EFFECT ACCEPTED THE BASIC PREMISE THAT THERE IS NEED FOR FULLY PROTECTED FUEL CYCLES TO PREVENT PROLIFERATION, WHILE HARNESSING NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. BUT THE MERE ASSOCIATION AT A TECHNICAL LEVEL IN SUCH A STUDY DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY IMPOSE ANY CONSTRAINTS ON INDIA'S PART TO SLOW DOWN OR ABANDON ITS OWN NUCLEAR PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPING FAST BREEDER FUEL CYCLES.

THERE ARE SOME OTHER COUNTRIES LIKE FRANCE AND WEST GERMANY, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH ARE SIGNATORIES TO THE NPT, BUT DO NOT SHARE THE U.S. VIEW THAT THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS ARE INADEQUATE FOR PREVENTING THE DIVERSION OF PLUTONIUM FROM THE PRESENT DAY FUEL CYCLES. BUT THEY HAVE AGREED TO TAKE PART IN THE CONFERENCE WITHOUT ANY PREJUDICE TO THEIR POSITIONS ON THE OVER-ALL ISSUE OF FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS ON ALL ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT.

AGREED GUIDELINES NOT EVOLVED

THE 14-NATION NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP HAS NOT SO FAR BEEN ABLE TO EVOLVE ANY AGREED GUIDELINES FOR REGULATING THE SALE
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OF EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS OR TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY, IN RELATION TO POWER REACTORS OR REPROCESSING PLANTS, BECAUSE IT IS A BIG BUSINESS RUNNING INTO BILLIONS OF DOLLARS WITH A TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION IN THE NEXT TWO DECADES. THESE COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN COMPLETELY SUBORDINATED BY THE MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP TO THE IDEAL OF NON-PROLIFERATION.

CONCEPT OF FOOL-PROOF SAFEGUARDS

MOREOVER, NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY HAS NOW ADVANCED TO A STATE THAT IT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY TO CONDUCT TESTS FOR ACQUIRING THE CAPABILITY TO BUILD DEVICES THAT CAN BE USED FOR PEACEFUL OR MILITARY PURPOSES. IF THE BIG POWERS ARE STILL CONDUCTING TEST EXPLOSIONS, IT IS ONLY TO REFINE THE TECHNOLOGY FOR ACHIEVING A HIGHER DEGREE OF SOPHISTICATION IN THE DESIGN AND YIELD OF THESE DEVICES. THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF FOOL-PROOF SAFEGUARDS AGAINST POSSIBLE DIVERSION OF FISSIONABLE MATERIALS FROM THE PRESENT GENERATION FUEL CYCLES IS, THEREFORE, BEING DISPUTED WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT THE DANGERS OF PROLIFERATION CANNOT BE CONTAINED COMPARTMENTALLY THROUGH STRICTER INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS AND SUPERVISION WITHOUT MATCHING MOVES

TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.

URANIUM FUEL SUPPLY TO TARAPUR PLANT

THE INDIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE MEETING OF THE ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF THE INFCE CONVENED HAS NO DIRECT BEARING ON THE INDO-AMERICAN BILATERAL DIALOGUE ON CONTINUED FULFILMENT OF THE U.S. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION TO SUPPLY ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL FOR THE TARAPUR PLANT. BUT IT IS CERTAINLY A PART OF THE WIDER EXERCISE UNDER WAY FOR EVOLVING SAFER FUEL CYCLES THAT WOULD COMPLY MORE ADEQUATELY WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF PLUGGING THE LOOPHOLES IN THE PRESENT SAFEGUARD SYSTEMS. IN ADHERING TO ITS TOUGH STAND OVER THE DISCRIMINATORY ASPECTS OF THESE MOVES, INDIA CANNOT AFFORD TO KEEP OUT OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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STUDIES WITHOUT EXPOSING ITSELF TO THE CHARGE OF INTRANSIGENCE.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO BASIS AT ALL FOR THE REPORTS THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN TRYING TO CLAMP DOWN THE SO-CALLED FULL SCOPE SAFEGUARDS ON THE ENTIRE FIELD OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME AT THE POINT OF PISTOL BY THREATENING TO CUT OFF THE ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL SUPPLIERS TO TARAPUR STARTING WITH THE NEXT CONSIGNMENT. WHILE THE INTENTION IS TO BRING INDIA WITHIN THE ORBIT OF FULLER INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS AND SUPERVISION, THE U.S. WOULD NOT BE SO FOOLISH AS TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. MORARJI DESAI, TO CARRY THE INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION WITH HIM IN FORSAKING FURTHER TESTS. THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS HAVE BEEN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HIS STAND THAT NO TESTS ARE NECESSARY EVEN FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN CARRYING FORWARD THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST PROLIFERATION.

BUT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO DELHI, THE U.S. NEGOTIATOR, MR. JOSEPH NYE, TALKED IN TERMS OF A TWO-YEAR TIME-FRAME FOR ARRIVING AT AN UNDERSTANDING WITH INDIA OVER THESE COMPLEX ISSUES INVOLVING CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. IT WAS QUITE EVIDENT FROM HIS REMARKS THAT THE U.S. MIGHT UNILATERALLY TERMINATE THE TARAPUR AGREEMENT, IF INDIA WAS NOT PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH THE NUCLEAR POWERS IN EVOLVING MORE COMPREHENSIVE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST PROLIFERATION. THERE IS NO INDICATION YET THAT OTHER COUNTRIES LIKE FRANCE, WEST GERMANY AND JAPAN, WHICH ARE ALSO UNDER SIMILAR THREATS, ARE PREPARED TO FALL IN LINE WITH THE U.S. DICTATES TO GIVE UP WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE THEIR LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO DEVELOP THE BREEDER TECHNOLOGY AND BUILD POWER REACTORS IN THIRD COUNTRIES WITH THE EXISTING PROCEDURES FOR INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION.

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